

# **Jefferson Parish Public School System**

## **Accessible Instructional Materials** *Specially Formatted Textbooks* **Guide for Teachers**



**November 15, 2018**

# INTRODUCTION

In accordance with IDEA, school systems must give “consideration for every student with a disability who is eligible for an individualized education program as to whether the student requires assistive technology devices and/or services to receive an appropriate education.” Beyond the above statement, federal law (IDEA 2004) requires State and Local Education Agencies to adopt the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) and to determine efficient approaches to provide core curricular materials in accessible, NIMAS-compliant formats.

This resource guide was developed to provide teachers with a method for determining a student’s need for specially formatted textbooks and the steps required to obtain them.

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# SECTION 1

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## DEFINITIONS & FEDERAL LAWS

## DEFINITIONS

**Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)** are materials which are created to help students who struggle to decode or extract meaning from print-based materials, such as textbooks.

**National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC)** is a federally-funded, national electronic file **repository** that makes NIMAS files available for the production of core printed instructional materials in specialized formats.

- The NIMAC receives source files in NIMAS format from **textbook publishers**, and makes these files available for download to Authorized Users in the United States and its territories through an online database.

**National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS)** is the standard established to be used in the preparation of electronic files suitable and used solely for efficient conversion into “specialized formats.”

- The NIMAS file sets are provided for the sole, express purpose of producing accessible instructional materials for blind or other persons with print disabilities in elementary and secondary schools as defined in section 674(e)(3) of IDEA.

**Bookshare.org** is a website where students that meet the NIMAS qualifications can receive a free membership to download books, novels, newspapers, etc.

- [www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)
- All teachers and students have to be submitted to bookshare.org by Suzanne Nugent. Please contact her for more information-  
[Suzanne.Nugent@jppss.k12.la.us](mailto:Suzanne.Nugent@jppss.k12.la.us)

## FEDERAL

Federal law (IDEA 2004) requires State and Local Education Agencies to adopt the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) and to determine efficient approaches to provide core curricular materials in accessible, NIMAS-compliant formats.

IDEA requires local education agencies to provide these specialized formats to all students who are identified as print disabled, whether or not they qualify for NIMAS-derived materials.

# **SECTION 2**

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## **QUALIFICATIONS & SPECIALIZED FORMATS**

## WHO QUALIFYS FOR DIGITAL TEXTBOOKS?

1. Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
2. Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by **competent authority** as preventing the reading of standard printed material.
3. Persons certified by **competent authority** as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
4. Persons certified by **competent authority** as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.

## WHO DETERMINES THAT MY STUDENT QUALIFIES?

In cases of (1) blindness, (2) visual disability, or (3) physical limitations, a "**competent authority**" determines that a student meets the qualifications for specially formatted textbooks. The **competent authority** is defined to include doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, ophthalmologists, optometrists, registered nurses, therapists, professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, **\*\*\*rehabilitation teachers\*\*\***, and superintendents).

- In JPPSS, the LaDOE recognized Competent Authority for **blindness (1), visual disability (2), or physical limitations (3)** is Suzanne Nugent, Assistive Technology Specialist.
- Qualified teachers and qualified pupil appraisal personnel can also identify students with print disabilities 1, 2, and 3; however, the paperwork kept on file must have the signature of the JPPSS Competent Authority.
- In the case of a **reading disability from organic dysfunction**, competent authority is defined as **doctors of medicine** who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

## **SPECIALIZED FORMATS**

- “Specialized formats” are **Braille, audio, digital text or large type.**
  - 1. Braille**
  - 2. Audio**
  - 3. Digital Text**
  - 4. Large Print**
  
- “Specialized formats” are exclusively for use by:
  - visually impaired and blind students
  - students with print disabilities (other than blind)

# **SECTION 3**

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## **DETERMINING STUDENT NEED AIM 1**

## GUIDING QUESTION

Given standard print-based\* curriculum materials used in the content areas, does the student have difficulty accessing or gaining meaning from the materials?

If the answer to this question is **YES**, then the student **MAY** qualify for digital textbooks.

\*print-based core materials are textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, basal textbooks, and reproducible materials printed on paper, in a book, or single sheet format

## FACTORS

Identify factors that contribute to the student's difficulty in accessing standard print-based curriculum materials.

- Physical**
- Cognitive**
- Visual**
- Reading Disability**
- Auditory**
- Perceptual**
- Attention Deficit Behaviors**
- Dyslexia**
- Other**

## CURRENT READING ABILITY

Is the student able to read at a sufficient rate and with adequate comprehension in order to complete academic or curricular tasks with success, relative to same-age peers?

### Evidence

- Current performance indicated by data  
(DIBELs Scores, Standardized Test Results, Informal Teacher Test,  
Teacher Observation and Formal Evaluation)**
- Reading efficiency**
- Reading comprehension**

## OTHER BARRIERS

Identify any barriers other than the print-based format that prevent student access to instructional materials.

- Lack of instruction
- Inadequate pre-requisite skills
- Behaviors
- Other

## STRATEGIES

List the strategies or accommodations to materials that have already been tried to address reading or access. Have they been successful?

- Typical reading strategies (non-technology related)
- Any technology related strategies
- Multiple texts or any teacher created texts

## ALTERNATE FORMAT

Identify any changes to the text format of standard print material that the student needs.

- Print-based to digital format
- Electronic Text
- Picture-symbols
- Color of text or background colors
- Use of style sheets
- Standard print to enlarged print
- Standard print to Braille
- Print-based to audio format

# AIM 1

Complete Determining Student Need for AIM form – AIM 1 (see Appendix). Send the form of students that may qualify to Suzanne Nugent, to determine eligibility.

Suzanne Nugent- AT Specialist  
Student Support  
501 Manhattan Blvd.

# **SECTION 4**

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## **ACQUIRING SPECIALLY FORMATTED TEXTBOOKS**

## HOW DO I ACQUIRE DIGITAL TEXTBOOKS FOR MY STUDENTS?

The referring teacher must:

1. Refer the student identified (or suspected of having a qualifying print disability) to the AT Team by using the AIM 1 and supporting evidence (IEP, evaluation, standardized test scores, grades, etc.)
2. Send these in the pony-mail to:  
Suzanne Nugent  
Student Support  
501 Manhattan Blvd.
3. An AT Team Member will contact you and/or see the referred student.
4. Forms and instructions will be sent by the AT Team to the referring teacher.
5. Referring teacher will complete the forms (AIM 2 and AIM 3), place copies of the forms in the student's SPED files at school and send the originals to the AT Specialist.
6. Requests for NIMAS files will be sent to the Textbook Specialist who will order the files from the School Book Supply Company of Louisiana.

*See Appendix*

- *Flowchart AIM 1*
- *Verification of Eligibility AIM 2*
- *NIMAS Textbook Request Form AIM 3*

# SECTION 5

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## APPENDIX

Determining Student Need for AIM

Identifying Information

Student Name:	Parent Name:	School:
Address:	Phone:	Last 4 digits of SSN:
Student has current: <input type="checkbox"/> IEP (IDEA Student Plan) <input type="checkbox"/> IAP (504 Student Plan)    504 Disability: _____	Exceptionality: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Neither IEP nor IAP	Grade: _____

Guiding Questions

Given standard \*print-based curriculum materials used in the content areas, does the student have difficulty accessing or gaining meaning from these materials?

Probe	Evidence
Have any <u>factors</u> been identified that contribute to the student's difficulty in accessing standard print-based curriculum materials?	<p><b>Factors</b></p> <p>Identify factors that contribute to the student's difficulty in accessing standard print-based curriculum materials:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Physical                      <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive                      <input type="checkbox"/> Visual  <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Disability            <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory                      <input type="checkbox"/> Perceptual  <input type="checkbox"/> Attention Deficit Disorder    <input type="checkbox"/> Dyslexia                      <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                 </p> <p>Where can above evidence be located for this student (IEP, IAP, evaluation?) _____</p>
Is the student able to read <u>standard printed materials</u> at a sufficient rate and with adequate comprehension in order to complete academic or curricular tasks with success, relative to same-age peers?	<p><b>Difficulty</b></p> <p>1. Identify the student's current performance indicated by data (DIBELS scores, Standardized Test Result, Informal Teacher Test, Teacher Observation and Formal Evaluation). _____</p> <p>2. Is the student's reading efficiency with standard print material adequate for timely completion of tasks? _____</p>
Do other barriers to reading proficiency exist?	<p><b>Other Barriers</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Instruction                      <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Pre-requisite skills  <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviors                                      <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                 </p>
Have <u>strategies</u> to address reading issues been successful?	<p><b>Strategies</b></p> <p>List the strategies or accommodation to materials that have already been tried to address reading or access. Have they been successful?</p>
Would the student benefit from an <u>alternate format</u> of core curriculum materials? If so, which?  <input type="checkbox"/> Braille <input type="checkbox"/> Large Print <input type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Digital	<p><b>Alternate Format</b></p> <p>Identify any changes to text format of standard print material that the student needs.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Print-based to digital format                      <input type="checkbox"/> Standard print to enlarged print  <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Text                                      <input type="checkbox"/> Standard print to Braille  <input type="checkbox"/> Picture-symbols                                      <input type="checkbox"/> Print-based to audio format  <input type="checkbox"/> Color of text or background color                      <input type="checkbox"/> Use of Style Sheets                 </p>
Would the student/educational team require <u>additional supports</u> for successful use/implementation of materials in an alternate format?	<p><b>Additional Supports</b></p> <p>Identify additional instruction, assistive technology, supports, services, and/or training that will be needed by the student and others to use the materials effectively.</p>

\* Print-based core materials are textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, basal textbooks and reproducible materials printed on paper, in books, or single sheet format.

Note: If a student who requires AIM is not eligible for the resources through the NIMAC, the district must provide appropriate AIM through other means such as direct purchase of an alternative format from the textbook publisher.

Has the student been certified as having a "print disability" by the District Competent Authority?	Is there a copy of the <i>Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials</i> form in the student's file?
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NIMAS/Bookshare.org Eligibility

- Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 2/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
- Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard print material.
- Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
- Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.

Is the student eligible to utilize files from the NIMAC or Bookshare.org?	Print name of person completing this form: _____
Please supply an answer in every area of this form.	Email address: _____
Submit completed file to your District AIM Liaison.	Date: _____ Mobile phone #: _____ Signed: _____

**JEFFERSON PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First M.I.

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address Apartment  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
City State ZIP Code

School & District \_\_\_\_\_

**From Federal Register 34 CFR Parts 300 and 301, p. 46621, published August 14, 2006:**

The Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)) related to the Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind (approved March 3, 1931, 2 U.S.C. 135a) provide that blind persons or other persons with print disabilities include:

- (i) *Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter if visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.*
- (ii) *Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.*
- (iii) *Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.*
- (iv) *Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.*

**Competent authority is defined in 36 CFR 701.6(b)(2) as follows:**

- (i) *In cases of **blindness, visual disability, or physical limitations** "competent authority" is defined to include doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, ophthalmologists, optometrists, registered nurses, therapists, professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and **superintendents**).*
- (ii) *In the case of a **reading disability from organic dysfunction**, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.*

**To Be Completed By Competent Authority (as defined above)**

Name Suzanne Nugent

Title Assistive Technology Specialist, JPPSS Phone (504) 365-5328

501 Manhattan Blvd.  
Street Address Apartment  
Harvey LA 70058  
City State ZIP Code

I certify that the student listed above is unable to read or use standard printed material for the following reason:

Blindness, visual impairment, or physical limitations

Reading disability from organic dysfunction

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**NIMAS TEXTBOOK REQUEST**

**Student Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last 4 Digits of SSN:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School Year Required:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Alternate Format Required:** \_\_\_ **Large Print** \_\_\_ **Braille** \_\_\_ **Digital** \_\_\_ **Audio**

**Person Requesting Book:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Room** \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Student must qualify to receive digital textbooks. (AIM 2)*

**Book Information**

Please complete **all** of the following information

<p><b>Name of Textbook:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Publisher:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Copyright Date:</b> _____</p> <p><b>ISBN:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Louisiana Book #:</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Name of Textbook:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Publisher:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Copyright Date:</b> _____</p> <p><b>ISBN:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Louisiana Book #:</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Name of Textbook:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Publisher:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Copyright Date:</b> _____</p> <p><b>ISBN:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Louisiana Book #:</b> _____</p>

# SECTION 6

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## REFERENCES

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The Accessible Instruction Materials (AIM) Consortium- LA. Available online, <http://www.atanswers.com/aim/>.

Bookshare.org (2009). Available online, <http://www.bookshare.org>.

National Instructional Materials Access Center (2006). Available online, <http://www.nimac.us/>.

## **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY TEAM MEMBERS**

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